

Tridandisvami Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja

ON THE SUBJECT OF SRI PRAHLADA

Badger, California: May 14, 2003 (evening)

[The following is a lecture given by Srila Narayana Maharaja on Lord Nrsimhadeva's appearance day last year in Badger, California. This is the first time it is published.]

Today is the appearance day of Sri Nrsimhadeva. I came here in the morning and requested that throughout the day at least twelve speakers discuss this subject. Now I think it would have been better had they not spoken anything, but just read the verses and the purports given by Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja. This would have been a million times better. I do not appreciate that they discussed topics that were not on the subject of Lord Nrsimhadeva. I wanted that the chapters on the pastimes of Sri Prahlada be read – from the first chapter to the end of the last chapter. I indicated this, but the speakers did not do so. I am very worried; how will they be able to preach if they cannot follow my instructions?

This was not the appearance day of Jaya and Vijaya; that part should have been told in outline. The speakers should have simply read Srimad Bhagavatam and its purports given by Srila Svami Maharaja.

I heard that one speaker said in his class that Ravana has ten heads. What was the purpose of telling this today? Another bogus speaker also spoke out of subject, by saying that Ravana attended the svayamvara of Sita (the ceremony wherein contestant princes compete for the hand of the princess in marriage). What was the purpose of saying this? I don't know. They should have spoken about the teachings of Prahlada to the children of the demons. That would have been very good, and I would have been very happy.

Try to follow my example. I never leave the appropriate subject. And speak only what I have previously told or what is written thoroughly in Srimad Bhagavatam and other scriptures. Only hear from bona fide persons. I wanted that all the best things be told. Be alert and very careful about this.

Now I am coming to the subject.

When Prahlada Maharaja returned from the school of the atheist teachers Sanda and Amarka and spoke to his father about the principles of Krsna consciousness, his father angrily told his teachers, "I will take your heads. Why did you teach Prahlada about devotional service to Visnu?"

Trembling, the teachers replied, "We have not taught Prahlada this. We don't know why he is speaking about it. You can ask him whether we taught him this."

Hiranyakasipu turned to Prahlada and asked, "Where have you learned this? If these two haven't told you this, then who has told you? Why are you boldly saying these things about surrendering to Visnu, my enemy?"

Prahlada began to reply, "Yes, you are all blind – these teachers and you. You are demons. If you do not take the dust of the lotus feet of highly qualified Vaisnavas devotees on your heads as ornaments, your so-called intelligence will send you to hell. So-called guru and disciple will both go to hell."

Hiranyakasipu became furious and, taking his sword and club, he ordered his men, "Bring mad elephants and poisonous snakes. Throw them on him so that they will kill him! Bring poison and forcibly give it to him! Bring my sister to put him in a fire. Throw him from a mountain into the ocean and bind him to a stone so that he will drown!" They did that; thousands of soldiers came to kill him, but they could not accomplish the result they desired. Hiranyakasipu became anxious and fearful, thinking, "I wanted to kill him, but he is not dying. And it may be that I will be killed by him."

Sanda and Amarka arrived and consoled him. They said, "Don't be worried, you have controlled Indra and all the other demigods, and Prahlada is like a mosquito compared to them. Why are you so anxious? Wait a little; our father Sukracarya has gone away for meditation. He will return shortly and make Prahlada a very good boy. Don't worry."

They took Prahlada with them to their school and began again to teach him politics, duplicity, hypocrisy, diplomacy, how to earn money and how to rule a country – to divide and control. Prahlada did not say anything in the class; he was simply remembering his Lord Krsna.

One day the teachers told Prahlada, "We are going out for an important job, so for some time you should watch over these boys, like a monitor. We will return very soon."

With their teachers absence the boys began to play here and there. Prahlada requested them, "Don't do so. Please hear; I will tell something that will make your life happy." Prahlada Maharaja then began to tell what the speakers did not touch. I am very worried.

Sri Prahlada told them, "If you don't take to Krsna consciousness right now, then, later on, how will you be able to give up absorption in your newly married wife or your weeping small children? If your father is very old, how will you be able to give him up? Your little children will be very lovingly calling, "Papa, Mama." How will you be able to give up absorption in them? Your beautiful gardens and beautiful dogs – how will you give them up? Better to give up everything material, and chant and remember Lord Krsna.

"If you want to be happy, then practice bhakti-yoga, devotional service, to Lord Krsna."

The students asked, "Prahlada, you are always attending this school of Sanda and Amarka, so where did you learn this philosophy?"

Prahlada Maharaja replied, "I never learned anything from these bogus gurus. My guru is Sri Narada Rsi. When I was in my mother's womb I learned all this philosophy from Sri Narada." Then he asked, "Are you convinced?"

The children replied, "Oh yes, we are all convinced."

"Then come with me and perform sankirtana, the congregational chanting of the Lord's holy names." He then began sankirtana.

[The devotees present in Srila Narayana Maharaja's class also began kirtana, but they were stopped by the loud voice of Sripad Asrama Maharaja acting as Hiranyakasipu, who was in turn "ripped open" by Sripad Mahibharata dasa, acting as Lord Nrsimhadeva in that two-minute drama.]

Thank you for this good demonstration.

In a moment, Lord Nrsimhadeva pulled Hiranyakasipu's intestines out, put them around his neck and began to roar. His mane began to fly in the air and made it seem as though the whole world would be finished. He was so furious that Lord Brahma, Lord Sankara, Sri Laksmi devi and all other great personalities who arrived to watch the scene thought, "Oh, he will destroy the whole universe." They requested Lord Brahma, "You are his son; you should go and pacify him."

Fearful, Lord Brahma objected, "Oh, this time I cannot go."

The demigods then they requested Lord Sankara to pacify him, but he said, "I cannot go."

After that they asked Laksmi devi, "Laksmi Devi, you are always serving and massaging him in the spiritual world. Please go and pacify him."

She replied, "Today I cannot go."

Brahma and others then requested Prahlada, "You can do it; you should go."

Hearing this, Prahlada, very boldly and with no fear at all, jumped onto the lap of Lord Nrsimhadeva. Seeing Prahlada, Lord Nrsimhadeva began to weep bitterly with many tears flowing from his lotus eyes. He began licking Prahlada's body, as a lion licks his cubs – because he was in the form of half-animal-half-man. After that he told Prahlada, "I am very upset that I have delayed. Your father gave you so much trouble – he even tried to kill you – and I delayed. Excuse me for this delay and take any benediction you like."

Prahlada Maharaja said, "I am not a business person. I don't want to beg anything, or take any boon in exchange for my service to you."

"Prahlada you must ask a boon, because your seeing me must not go in vain. You must ask any boon – to please me; otherwise I will not be pleased."

Prahlada said, "Please excuse my father and liberate him."

"It has been done."

"How has it been done?"

"Twenty-one generations of an uttama-adhikari, topmost Vaisnava will be liberated, even if the generations of family members are not devotees. For those who are madhyama-adhikari, second class devotees, their fathers and mothers of fourteen generations will be liberated. If one is even a kanistha, neophyte devotee, but sincerely chanting and remembering Krsna, then seven generations will easily be liberated. Your father is in the first generation; therefore he will surely be liberated. Now ask for any benediction."

Prahlada said, "If you want to give me a benediction, grant me that I should live in this world for many years, suffering everyone's problems which they have received due to the reactions of their sinful activities, and their pain of the endless chain of birth and death – so that all will be liberated – from top to bottom."

"How can this be?" Lord Nrsimhadeva asked.

Sri Prahlada said, "You can do this very easily, because you can come for your devotees. All the living beings are part and parcel of you, and they are your eternal servants. So I know that you can certainly liberate them."

Lord Nrsimhadeva then said, "If anyone hears, remember, or tells others about our pastimes, they will certainly be liberated. They will be liberated gradually – first taking shelter of Sri Gurudeva by instruction and initiation."

Sri Prahlada Maharaja never asked for salvation or sayujya mukti, the impersonal liberation of merging onto the Supreme Lord's effulgence. He rejected everything material, and therefore he is a high class parama-bhagavata, great devotee.

Nrsimhadeva told him, "You will be the ideal example." People will say, "Always be a great devotee like Prahlada Maharaja," He is a devotee like Prahlada Maharaja." When the subject of bhakti, pure devotional service comes, people will say, "Oh, Prahlada Maharaja was maha-bhagavata, a pure devotee. So many difficulties in life came, but he tolerated them all. He never cursed his father or replied in harsh words."

We should try to realize these truths and try to practice bhakti-yoga like Prahlada Maharaja.

I wanted the speakers to elaborately discuss this today in class. I am very worried; I am disappointed. This subject should be dealt with, giving up others. In the future you should

be careful about this. I wanted to glorify Prahlada Maharaja, but so many other subjects entered.

Why did Lord Nrsimhadeva appear from a pillar? He did so to make the words of his devotee true. Before being killed, Hiranyakasipu had asked Prahlada, "Where is your Lord? Have you ever seen him?"

Prahlada had replied, "Oh yes, He is everywhere. There is no place where He is not. He is in the atom, in the heart of all living beings – everywhere."

Do you believe this?

[Devotees:] Yes.

Then know that Lord Krsna is watching you, everywhere and in all circumstances. If you are stealing anything or doing any nonsense, others may not realize what you are doing, but He knows. He is everywhere.

Then Hiranyakasipu said, "Is He in this pillar?"

Prahlada replied, "Certainly."

Hiranyakasipu then picked up his club and, with his fist, he crushed the pillar. A loud roaring sound at once came from the pillar.

Frightened, Hiranyakasipu began looking around to see, "From where is this sound coming?" He then saw that it was coming from the pillar.

Lord Nrsimhadeva is so merciful that he came to fulfill the four Kumaras' curse of Jaya and Vijaya, the two gatekeepers in Vaikuntha who were cursed to come to this world as Hiranyakasipu and his brother, and to fulfill the boon which Brahma gave Hiranyakasipu. Hiranyakasipu could not be killed by anyone in creation, nor in the night, or in the day, nor in any month of the year, nor by any weapon. To make Lord Brahma's words true, Lord Nrsimhadeva came in the evening, at sunset, which is neither day nor night. He did not die in the sky or on the earth, for Lord Nrsimhadeva picked him up and put him on his lap. He did not die inside a room or outside, for Lord Nrsimhadeva killed him in a doorway. And he did not die by any weapon – for Lord Nrsimhadeva killed him with his nails. He ripped Hiranyakasipu apart and took out his intestines.

So Lord Nrsimhadeva came out from the pillar and Hiranyakasipu saw that He is everywhere. You may think, "I am alone when doing nonsense," but he will see. His eyes are the sun and moon; he is in all the atoms of air.

Lord Nrsimhadeva wanted to test Prahlada by offering him boons, to see if he was willing to be cheated by them. He offered to give him the sayujya-mukti that was given to Sisupala. He offered to give him that salvation which so many sages and Maharishis,

saintly kings, in the line of Sankaracarya cannot achieve in thousands of births. Nrsimhadeva was willing to give this to Prahlada very easily, but Prahlada refused it all. He again and again requested Prahlada to accept this, but he refused.

Prahlada said, "I am not a business person. I will not take a boon from you in exchange for my service to you. What to speak of this sayujya- mukti, impersonal liberation, I don't even have a personal desire to be in the spiritual planets of Vaikuntha. I don't want anything as remuneration."

Lord Nrsimhadeva asked, "What do you want?"

Sri Prahlada said, "Please be merciful to all living beings. By that I will be pleased, and you will also be pleased. Because you are bhakta- vatsala, you have an unlimited desire to please your devotees and you know that all living beings are your personal eternal servants, please be merciful and give that benediction to all. And, if you want, I will stay in this world forever, suffering for all their sinful reactions."

"O Acyuta, infallible Lord, I don't mind accepting hundreds of thousands of births – but I want that wherever I will be, I must receive the elevated association of your pure devotees and always worship You. I don't want anything else."

Sri Laksmi devi, Garuda, Lord Brahma, Lord Sankara and many other great personalities were present, but Lord Nrsimhadeva gave preference to Prahlada Maharaja. He said, "I could not cheat you. You have conquered me. I don't favor Sankarsana, or my Laksmi devi, or my messenger and carrier, Garuda, or Lord Brahma, as much as I favor you."

Sri Prahlada Maharaja never cared for any problem that arose in his life, and he accomplished his mission in a very short time. His father wanted to kill him, but he never cared. If death is to come, it will come; and you will not be able to do anything to protect yourself. Prahlada Maharaja was very bold; you should also be bold like him. I am telling all these truths, for you. If death is coming, or so many problems and sufferings are coming, try to keep your feet on the head of them all. Don't be upset. Try to do bhajana, chanting and remembering Krsna without any hesitation and not considering any obstacles. This is the teaching of Sri Prahlada Maharaja.

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